

Cumbria near the Lancashire border, to see whether in this rural setting the fairly numerous patches of gooseberry growing wild in hedges and in woodland supported *A. grossulariata* larvae.

The results of this investigation (in which I was greatly helped by my daughters Zerynthia and Melitaea) were very interesting, as all of the species of lepidopteran larvae found had a clear-cut preference for either fully exposed plants or those growing in almost completely shaded situations. *A. grossulariata* was present on most gooseberry bushes in sunny hedgerows but entirely absent on plants in full shade. Altogether 46 were collected from about ten well separated stands. The behaviourally similar larvae of the geometrid *Semiothisa wauaria* (L.) were also found only on gooseberry growing in the sun (15 on four stands), as were about 15 larvae of the noctuid *Conistra* sp. (probably *vaccinii* (L.)), collected more or less singly (and feeding also on other plants). In complete contrast, larvae of the geometrid *Eulithis prunata* (L.) were found only on more or less fully shaded gooseberry in woodland understorey (22 on eight stands), and no other Lepidoptera were found on such plants.

A large colony of *A. grossulariata* was also found, more or less accidentally, on a hedgerow stand of *Prunus ?cerasifera*, and in another place a few larvae were noticed feeding on *Corylus avellana*, again in a sunny hedge. The tachinid fly *Phryxe nemea* (Meigen) had found a few of the *A. grossulariata* on each of the three foodplants from which they were collected, but parasitism was at a very disappointingly low level overall — and certainly did not stand any comparison between plant (or even Lepidoptera) species.

Whether the demonstration that in rural N.W. England gooseberry continues to support *A. grossulariata* has any bearing on West's observations on foodplants in N.W. Kent is debatable, but I wonder whether it might be merely attrition from factors such as the increased levels of electric street lighting, garden pesticides and pollution from road traffic, rather than a change of diet as such, that has harried *A. grossulariata* from previously favourable urban and suburban environments generally?— MARK R. SHAW, National Museums of Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1JF.

### ***Utetheisa pulchella* L. the Crimson-speckled Footman (Lep.: Arctiidae) in the Channel Isles**

The contributions by J. Clarke and A.M. Riley in the March-April 1991 issue of the *Entomologist's Record* (103: 69 and 100) recording the capture of five specimens of *Utetheisa pulchella* in Cornwall and Devon have stimulated me to report the two seen in the Channel Islands at about the same time.

On 2.x.1990 D. Buxton showed me the five specimens which had come into his kitchen in Vallée des Vaux, Jersey, an inland valley about two miles north of Saint Helier. This was two days after the first of the English

specimens, and R.A. Austin informs me that on the following day, 3.x.1990, one came into the kitchen of Mrs J. Wells in Saint Martin, Guernsey, about two miles south-west of Saint Peter Port.

During the previous day or two the islands had been having mild, southerly winds but I am not aware of any other migrant species of note being found.

The only other Channel Islands' records of *U. pulchella* are of two in Guernsey in 1889 and one in Jersey in 1968.— R. LONG, Ozarda, Saint John, Jersey, Channel Islands JE3 4FP.

### *Eriogaster lanestris* Linn., the Small Eggar (Lep.: Lasiocampidae) in south Norfolk (v.c.27)

Upon returning from a walk recently (late June 1991) my wife commented on having seen several webs of caterpillars in a length of Norfolk hedge, beside the main A143 Diss to Great Yarmouth road. Having been aware that *Eriogaster lanestris* had been reported in this part of Norfolk — three webs of caterpillars in Hargham Road, Attleborough in June 1990 (Paul Cardy pers. comm.); a single adult to light at Rocklands, near Attleborough, in the spring this year (Jane Lee pers. comm.) and four webs reported from New Buckenham Common on 22nd June 1991 (Steve Ward pers. comm.) — I was anticipating a further site for the return of this species to Norfolk.

As I approached the stretch of road in Billingford, near Diss, I could see several webs in the hedge whilst I was driving along. These were just the large nests as I discovered when I walked the length of this particular piece of hedge, between a pond and a road junction. In the distance of a quarter of a mile I counted 73 webs, of which four were on elm, two on blackthorn and the remainder of hawthorn. These were all on the south facing road side of the hedge to the north of the road. I walked back to my car, counting webs along the north facing side of the hedge to the south of the road and recorded another eleven, with nine on hawthorn, one on elm and one on a small scrubby spindle bush which was almost totally defoliated. Because of tall crops, and recent heavy rain, I did not look on the field side of either of these two roadside hedges, but would assume that there were further webs to be found.

I did walk a further 250 yards northwards from the road junction at the eastern end of the first hedge surveyed and counted another eleven webs in the east facing hedge alongside this road — all these on hawthorn. On the opposite west facing hedge there were only four webs to be seen — one on hawthorn and three on elm. After 200 yards from the corner there were no more webs to be found.

The lengths of hedge where *Eriogaster lanestris* larval webs were so prolific are all well maintained, and regularly cut mechanically, with only the current year's growth standing out from the dense body of the shrubs. Other more straggly, and infrequently cut, hawthorn bushes and the short,